

CALFED Policy Group
Meeting Summary -- April 2, 1998

Release of the Draft EIS/EIR

- Policy Group discussed addition of public meetings and agreed to add the proposed 5 additional meetings to the schedule. They also agreed with the proposed meeting format to allow 1 hour for a question and answer period and proceed with the formal hearing process.
- There was also discussion about whether the addition of these 5 meetings would address legislative concerns and most Policy Group members felt that it would.

Implementation Strategy

Discussion Items:

- How do we make assurances fit into a 5-year staging plan? How can we deal with ESA restrictions if we determine the solution for the problems is the isolated conveyance? What can we offer in terms of assurances until the solution is implemented?
- Need to separate staged decision making from staged implementation. We must make a substantial decision in December 98 to keep the momentum going. At the May Policy Group meeting, we need to discuss the "nature of the decision".
- The decision in December could still be a programmatic decision - - commitments could be made to do some things, however, many others will still be conditional - need to identify the preferred alternative.
- We need to distinguish the decision from implementation. Adaptive management should focus on implementation and not the decision.
- Other discussions focused on the need to not jump to a conclusion for an alternative yet - need to have discussions about what it will take to get to a certain point and then brainstorm the pitfalls.
- At the May meeting, we need to generate specific issues that we can begin to discuss that will help move us closer to a decision.
- Need to beef up the Common Programs by having triggers - these triggers will serve as decision making tools in a large scale ecosystem program.
- People are expecting the final decision to be a decision that moves us forward - must be different from what we have today.

Work Program

- The Management Team meeting in April will focus on the agency staffing issue for the work program. It is critical that agencies participate early in the process to ensure the issues are addressed appropriately.
- Names of staff to work on specific work efforts should be provided to Judy before the next Management Team meeting.

Addressing Comments

Discussion:

- Program must evaluate the impact of comment extension. Rick Breitenbach reviewed both a 30 and 60-day extension period. It still may be possible to compress the time needed to develop the response to comments. As long as the Program knows the nature of the comments and can develop responses, even if the actual comment is received on the last day of the comment period, it shouldn't negatively effect the schedule.
- Discussions of both the work plan and the kinds of work we expect to do over the next 6 months in addition to the nature of the actual decision should help people be comfortable with a December 98 deadline and a short review period.

Action:

- At the May meeting - need to review reasons for comment extension and make decision on what extension period should be.

Comment Response Process

Discussion:

- Need to develop process and structure to ensure that agency comments are aired and addressed in an iterative fashion.
- Agency comments will be utilized to help Program address many public comments.

Action:

- Agency Response Team will be formed to identify and attempt to resolve issues - concerns between agencies will be brought to Management Team and Policy Group for further discussion and resolution.
- If issues that are not resolved, agencies may have to put in writing their unresolved concerns.

Issues of Special Concern

1) Time Value of Water

- We need to separate the issues - there is value to a high hydrograph - need to be able to make that clearer as some stakeholders believe we have said there is no value.

- Need an issue paper to clearly describe time value of water – is an important concept, cannot be misunderstood or interpreted incorrectly.
- Policy Group acknowledges that the overall time value of water policy is valid, however, it is only as good as the underlying technical analysis which needs more work and better description.

2) Potential Operational Changes

- Service will provide some language to help explain this concept.

3) Common Pool

Discussion:

- This is a delta agricultural term referring to the concern over abandoning the delta if an isolated facility was built.
- All alternatives have a tie into the Common Pool since none of the alternatives call for full isolation.
- This is a key assurance issue for Delta and Bay water users.

Action:

- CALFED Policy on Common Pool will be further defined by staff providing talking points on the topic.

Restoration Coordination/Proposal Solicitation Package

Action:

- Policy Group will be briefed at their July meeting on the proposals received to ensure information is available on proposals early in the process.
- CALFED agencies should coordinate within their own agencies if they are submitting proposals and possibly have proposals approved internally prior to submittal to CALFED.
- CVPIA. Approved an approximately \$2 million in additional funding for previously approved CALFED Category III projects to cover the funding amount previously identified from CVPIA funding. Approval conditioned on concurrence by Roundtable and final approval by Management Team.
- Twitchell Island Subsidence Project. Approved approximately \$500,000 in additional funding for the project conditioned on Roundtable concurrence and final approval by Management Team.